

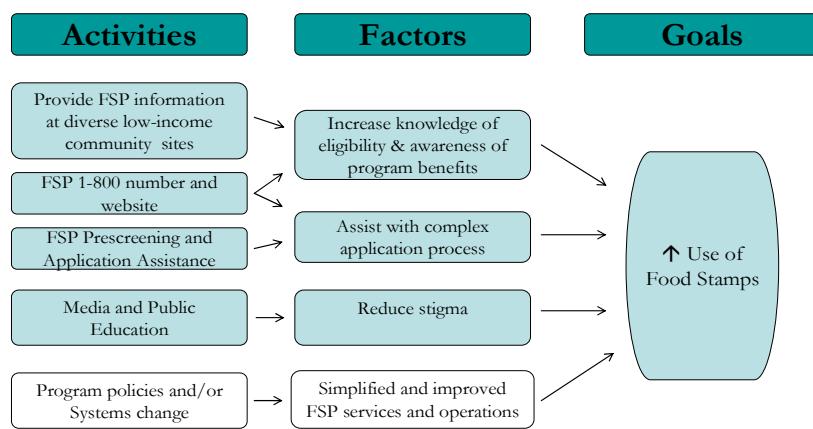
**Key Result Area 4: Reporting and Evaluation - Information is systematically used to strengthen the CFSPAIP through research and evaluation activities and technical assistance to contractors for: 1) defining clear and measurable objectives linked to the project's overall goal; 2) monitoring and reporting implementation of key project activities; 3) tracking the status of assisted Food Stamp applicants and Food Stamp participation at the county and state levels; and 4) identifying and disseminating lessons learned and best practices to CFSPAIP stakeholders and larger community.**

### **Overview:**

The *Network's* Research and Evaluation Unit (REU) is responsible for supporting the evaluation needs of over 134 Local Incentive Awardees and special projects providing nutrition education to low-income Californians. The REU will also support and provide the technical assistance to systematically use information to better achieve the goals of the CFSPAIP project. *Network* REU and program management staff will work with CAFB and its field-based subcontractors to help define clear and measurable project objectives linked to the overall project's goals and establish regular programmatic reporting and performance tracking methodologies.

The principal impact of interest is the degree to which Food Stamp participation increases through the activities of CAFB and its subcontractors. CDHS- and CDSS-sponsored research found that income-eligible persons do not participate in the FSP because they are often not aware of the program; do not believe they are eligible; perceive the application process as to a complicated; believe the

**Figure 1: Food Stamp Outreach Impact Model**



application process to be too extensive, intrusive and complex; suffer stigma and rude treatment by staff; or, if they are immigrants, that they will have difficulty obtaining legal residency if they participate in the Food Stamp program. These factors all fit into the middle column of Figure 1 mediating the achievement of the ultimate goal—increased Food Stamp utilization. The principal CFSPAIP activities for addressing these factors are in the **shaded** boxes and include the work done by local contractors to provide FSP information, conduct pre-screening and application assistance in a tremendous variety of community settings. As described in KRA 1, CFSPAIP will also work to establish a 1-800 toll free FSP information line and web site at the state level. The **unshaded** boxes represent important FSP policy or systems change outside the scope of “outreach” activities that would lead to increased participation.

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At the sub-contractor level, the scope and scale of FSP outreach activities will be tracked. The number and percent of assisted individuals who ultimately are enrolled in the FSP helps document program benefits. Conversely, knowing how many and, most importantly, *why* assisted applicants were not enrolled provides very useful information for follow-up corrective action with applicants and others involved with the eligibility process. The REU will be involved with the design, development and testing of an on-line management information system (MIS) that provides operational data to project funders, administrators, and managers. Program impact will also be assessed more generally through Food Stamp participation figures for counties involved in the project and for the state overall. In addition, the REU will provide evaluation support for assessing the operation of the expanded toll-free 800# and the statewide call center handling incoming calls and providing information and referral and possibly prescreening services.

*Program Design-Scopes of Work*

- I. By October 2006, all CFSPAIP contractors have finalized Scopes of Work with clear and measurable objectives linked to the project's impact model and overall goal to increase eligible person's access and utilization of the FSP.

The CFSPAIP contractors have diverse skills and assets reflecting the range of expertise and community contacts necessary for increasing Food Stamp utilization in California. The project's impact model serves to unify efforts toward this common goal. Together with program managers, REU staff will provide feedback to contractors in the program design stage so that project funded activities are clearly defined, measurable and serve the objectives of the project's overarching impact model.

*Process Evaluation*

- II. By December 2006, establish web-based system for tracking and summarizing CFSPAIP contractors' major FSP outreach activities.
- III. By May 15, 2007, provide feedback to all CFSPAIP contractors based on their semi-annual project reports submitted by April 15, 2007.
- IV. On a quarterly basis, REU staff will summarize and disseminate statistics for FSP oriented calls to #1-800 and Eat-Five phone lines.
- V. By October 2007, at least four presentations have been made and materials posted sharing the best practices and lessons learned either at *Network*-sponsored events or other venues with large numbers of interested persons.
- VI. By December 2007, CPNS provides USDA and CDSS with an annual report summarizing project performance and recommendations for future action based on project monitoring and evaluation findings.

Programmatic reporting will be required of all CFSPAIP contractors on a semi-annual basis. In FFY2006, CPNS and CAFB identified specific indicators for programmatic tracking. The focus for early FFY2007 will be to establish a web-based system to facilitate the collection, summary and analysis of this information. Summary statistics will be viewable on this web page so

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individual contractors can compare the scope and scale of their outreach activities relative to others. In addition, the interim report will document challenges, lessons learned and major accomplishments that can inform program managers follow-up action through the remainder of the year. REU staff will also summarize and disseminate FSP call information on the program monitoring website. As appropriate, CFSPAIP contractors will be encouraged to make presentations and share best practices to accelerate learning, dissemination and expansion of access improvement activities. CPNS will synthesize and summarize project results in an annual report for USDA and CDSS. This report will include recommendations for future project direction solicited from CFSPAIP contractors and based on CPNS's own observations.

*Outcome Evaluation*

- VII. Quarterly reports (four) of the Food Stamp participation figures for each county with Food Stamp access improvement interventions and for the state overall.
- VIII. Work with CAFB to select and adapt as necessary a FSP screener software that would include follow-up tracking of assisted FSP applicants and incorporate outcomes into web-based program tracking system.
- IX. Work with CAFB to identify at least two CFSPAIP contractors who receive application determination information from their county social service agency data tracking efforts on the status of assisted persons and incorporate outcomes into web-based program tracking system.

Using CDSS FSP participation figures, REU staff will provide project stakeholders quarterly reports of the Food Stamp participation figures for counties with Food Stamp access improvement interventions and for the state overall. These reports will be shared with all CFSPAIP contractors and at regular FANOut meetings as well as posted on the web. This information will allow project stakeholders to assess, in a general way, whether FSP utilization is increasing in CFSPAIP counties more than the state overall. More specifically, REU staff will work with CAFB to select and adapt as necessary a FSP screener tool that includes follow-up tracking of assisted applicants. By the end of the year, this tool would be rolled out to CFSPAIP contractors and this outcome information will be incorporated into the web-based program tracking. In some counties, CFSPAIP contractors may have been able to successfully partner with their county administering agency to track the status of all assisted applicants including if denied, why. Where available, this impact oriented information will be included in contractor's semi-annual reports and the project's overall annual report to USDA and CDSS.